

Appl. No. 09/574,996  
Amdt. dated December 15, 2003  
Preliminary Amendment

PATENT

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please add the following new paragraph before paragraph 0001:

**CONTINUITY**

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application No. 09/574,996, filed May 19, 2000, which has been allowed, with issue fee due December 22, 2003.